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[title page]

BOKFÖRLAGS AKTIEBOLAGET THULE · STOCKHOLM

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County Galway

342

1.

2.

3.

1. Central-chimney house. Spiddle, Co. Galway.

2. Gable-chimney house. The weaver's house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

3. Central-chimney house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

[p. 205]

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County Mayo

PLATE XLII

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1.

1. The cailleach built close to the fireplace. Fallmore, Co. Mayo.

2. Gable-chimney house. Belmullet, Co. Mayo.

342

2.

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NOTES ON THE IRISH HOUSE

BY ÅKE CAMPBELL, UPPSALA

121 In the discussions on the complicated problems of the European house traditions, the peasant Irish house has hitherto been almost ignored, in spite of the fact that the Irish house could certainly yield some important information. Ireland constitutes a reservoir of Celtic and other traditions of great antiquity and of special importance for the moulding of European folk-culture.[1]

To study the Irish peasant house, it is first of all necessary to make detailed field surveys for all parts of Ireland and then to compare these with the results of similar investigations in all related countries. But not less important is it to consider these conclusions in the light of the information we get in the Ancient Irish Laws (the culture here described dates from pagan times i. e. prior to the middle of the 5th century A. D.) the literature (particularly the Heroic tales of the Ulster cycle), and the vocabulary of the older language as well as that of the modern Irish dialects.

128 Postponing for further discussion (in part II of this article) the buildings of very archaic constructions, viz. the stone beehive huts or rectangular huts roofed by a system of overlapping stones and the most primitive or simplified house types (huts of wickerwork, sod, turf), I will here firstly consider Irish houses, stone-built and mudhouses with roof resting on wooden couples. These houses represent a slightly more developed stage of construction than the above mentioned types. They are all inhabited in modern times.[2]

341 It is a remarkable fact that even the most primitive Irish houses still inhabited — houses with only one room showing traces of its original task to shelter both the human family and the cattle, walls built without mortar, fireplace without any chimney etc. — are already divided into two principal types, namely (1) the house with the fire-place placed somewhere near the centre of the house or at least not just at the gablewall, so there are bedplaces behind the fire-place in the upper end of the house, often thatched gables, and (2) the house with stone-built gables and the fireplace close to the gable wall. In a former article (Béaloideas 1935 p. 57 et sq.) I have

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341 called the first type *the central-chimney house,* because the chimney will be erected over the fire-place somewhere about the middle of the roof, (fig. 1 and pl. XLI: 1, 2, 3 ; the second *the gable chimney house* because here the chimney will be close to the gable often being built as a part of the stone-built gable (fig. 2 and pl. XLI: 2). The outside chimney then not seldom forms a pronounced gabletop or gable-finial.

The Central-chimney house.

342 Some of the most primitive houses I found in Ireland belong to the central chimney house type. To illustrate I choose a house from Spiddle, Co. Galway (fig. 3 and pl. XLI: 1). The house is said to have been built before 1839 and to have withstood the "big wind" of that year. How old it actually is I had no means of discovering. The walls are of stone with the mortar put on afterwards on the inside and outside, but not used in the actual construction of the walls. Some outhouses belonging to this farm are all of dry wall construction. The roof of straw rests on couples of beams, supported on the inner edge of the walls, so that the thatch does not quite reach as far as the outside edge of the wall, but leaves a narrow space uncovered.
[171] This is an archaic feature found now in very old buildings in Ireland, as always in the black houses of Scotland.

The house is built on a slope, so that the fireplace end of the house lies higher than the entrance door. There is only one room, but a low partition wall at the back of the fire cuts off a section which is used as a bedroom.
[352] In the lower end of the house a dresser is placed so that it together with a small table cuts off another section that nowadays is also used as a bedroom. Some stools, a cradle and a churn are the other contents. There are two doors opposite of each other, both provided with half-doors. The fireplace consists of some flat stones on the floor. Over the fireplace there is a
[354] wattled chimney resting on two beams, supported by a cross beam. The chimney is adapted to a hole in the thatched roof, so there is no outside chimney. On one side of the house, the sheltered side, there are two windows.

About other houses of the same kind, I have heard from the inhabitants
[231] that in olden times the lower end of the house was used for the cattle. In late times the cattle have been removed to an outhouse and this part of the house has been adopted as a living room.

342 The division of the house into three sections, which is characteristic of the
171 central-chimney house type, is quite clear in the Scottish houses, namely the black houses, the bedroom being at the upper end of the house behind the

[Text continues Top of P.211]

PLATE XLIII

342 1. Dry stone walls. Cillrialaig, Co. Kerry.

2. Oval house. Inveran, Co. Galway.

1.

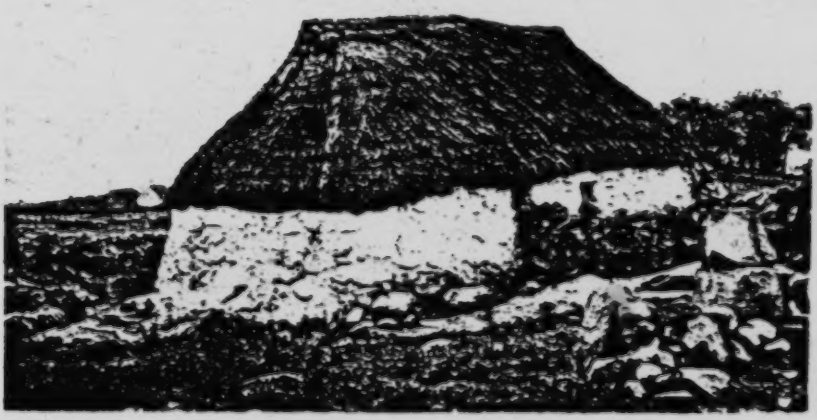

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PLATE XLIV

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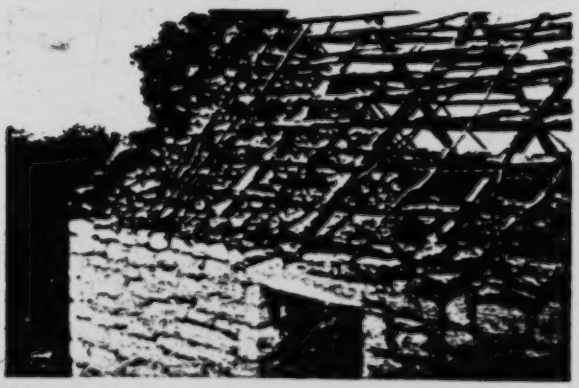

2.

3.

1. House with stepgables. The small stones interlaying the bigger stones. Annaghdown, Co. Galway.

2. Roof-construction. Annaghdown, Co. Galway.

3. The gables facing the sea. Cillrialaig, Co. Kerry.

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342 fire, and the byre at the lower end of the house. In the Welsh long-house
171 the hearth generally seems to face the living room and bedroom part of the house, and cuts these sections from the byre part. The two doors, opposite to each other, very typical of the Irish house (see p. 217), are also found in the Welsh long-houses, but here the space between the two doors has a more pronounced feeding-walk character, than we find common in Ireland, at least to-day when the cattle are generally removed from the dwelling house. For the three sections of some South Scandinavian houses see p. 222.

The gable-chimney house.

342 In various parts of Ireland I have found numbers of primitive houses with stone-built gables. These houses are always rectangular in form, never oval. Externally the type varies greatly depending mostly on the prevailing wind. On the coast, in very windy districts, the roof will not be built very high, but in more sheltered parts, it will be more lofty.

The gable finial, the gable top often consitutes a very characteristic feature of this house-type, pl. XLII: 2. Only where the low roof is used, the gable top is not especially accentuated. The outside chimney constitutes the gable top of the chimney-gable. On the opposite gable the gable-finial may be form-
[341] ed in a corresponding way, as a chimneyshaft without any flue. The chimney-shafts at the gables form perhaps the single example in the Irish peasant house of intentional architecture conforming with a wide-spread custom in Western Europe. As regards the serrated gable-ends see p. 226.

342 In small dwellings of this type there is only one room, the fireplace is si-
354 tuated against one gable-wall. The most convenient place for the beds is be-
352 side the fire, and at least one bed is to be found here. This is a very original feature of this house-type which is confirmed by Scottish material, old Irish descriptions, and even drawings. In the middle-west and north of Ireland, the bed is built in a projection outwards, *cailleach*, or at least in a niche in the side wall close to the fireplace, pl. XLII: 2, as in the Scottish *tig dubh*.

342 As in the central-chimney house, there are sometimes two doors opposite each other, but even a single door is common in small old houses.

Windows have come at a later period here also. In old-fashioned houses there is generally only one window, sometimes none at all.

342 At the lower end of the house, there was in more remote times place for
231 domestic animals. The division of the room by means of the dresser may have been adopted at an early stage, the dresser being especially suitable as

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342 a kind of partition. When the domestic animals were removed, often to an
231 additional building at the gablewall, this part of the house would be used as a living room, just as in the former type of house, fig. 4. In a few very pri-
342 mitive houses of this as well as of the foregoing type I have found fireplaces with no chimney at all, the smoke leaving the house through a hole in
354 the roof above the fireplace. Sometimes I have found two smoke holes, one in each end of the roof. The doors and half doors constitute together with the smokeholes a complicated machinery, providing the current of air to regulate the turf-fire and the smoke.

Dwelling houses without chimneys were found by me in 1935 at Belmullet, Co. Mayo and in Co. Sligo.

342 The houses with thatched gables sometimes have rounded corners so that the base foundation may have an almost oval shape on the outside, while the inside room may be rectangular in form, pl. XLIII: 2. It is evident that the oval house form and the thatched gables complement each other. They could have existed together from a very early stage in building traditions. In a windy district the rounded and thatched gables are suitable, as the house will be more stream lined.

The roof with a thatched gable can easily have replaced the stone, or cyclopic roof, in cabins and huts (both, bothán). This fact and certain similarities would seem to indicate that the oval house form in the above-mentioned houses with thatched gables, may have developed from the round
[171] or beehive house type. Parallels may be found among the stone-built huts with similar roofs in Estremadura and elsewhere.

On the other hand, houses with stone-built gables represent quite clearly the rectangular house type, as in such constructions the gables are never rounded.

342 The stone-built gable constitutes a very practical way of solving the pro-
346 blem of how to protect the gable ends of the roof of an oblong house against the wind, pl. XLIV: 3. But there is another point to be considered. In mediæval houses in villages and cities, the gables have often developed according to the use and importance of the gable wall; when the house faces the street or main road the gable wall would be far more important than the side walls. Other features point to ecclesiastical architecture. In the early churches, in Ireland and elsewhere, the gable wall constituted the front wall. In Ireland the early primitive churches were often furnished with pronounced gable finials. Furthermore it has been suggested that the introduction of the rectangular form of house is due to the first propagators of Christianity

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342 346

in Ireland, as we find in an early Irish stanza predicting this and other Christian innovations (Life of St. Patrick, translated by Colgan, p. 123).

346

It seems to me to be very likely that the above mentioned architecture of villages, towns and churches in Western Europe, giving prominence to the gable-wall, may have played an important role in the development of rectangular houses with stone-built gables in Ireland and elsewhere in Western Europe. As to Irish conditions, I would observe that the very small primitive rectangular churches, hardly bigger than an ordinary house, known from the Aran Islands and other places, have surely been built by no other builders than those who built the peasant houses. The clergy instructed them and planned the architecture. Then the people learned that the stone built gable was very useful both as protection for the ends of the thatched roof and as an arrangement for the fire, readily forming a chimney or stone-built venthole for the smoke.

171

But the early Christian churches cannot have constituted the original primitive form for every kind of rectangular house in Western Europe. As Addy (Addy: Evolution of the English House, p. 38 sq.) has mentioned, very primitive huts built in "bays" formed by "crucks" are known from the Welsh Laws as "Summer Houses". These houses consisted of a pair of "crucks" and a ridge-tree, and were completed by wattles. This form of house can be shown to be of great antiquity and can be studied over a large area. Material from Africa, the Mediterranean countries, the countries on the shores of the Atlantic, show that the square form is of greater antiquity than Christianity, so it does not follow that the rectangular house in Western Europe must necessarily owe its origin to Christian innovations, it can very well go back to a much earlier form of culture.

342 171

Regarding the higher development of the cruck-construction (or crutch) as discussed by S. O. Addy with examples from England, I would observe that the small stone-built one-storeyed Irish houses, the primitive Welsh long-house, the black houses of Scotland, as well as the small houses of Scandinavia and elsewhere have been sufficiently roofed by a very primitive small roof of pairs of beams, similar to that of the above mentioned huts, summerhouses etc. Even circular huts may have been roofed by a thatched roof, resting on a radial framework of branches without any central pole as in the Sudan circular hut, *tukl*, mentioned by A. E. Robinson, who has suggested that some prehistoric huts in Ancient Britain were of the *tukl* type (Antiquity 1930, p. 230). In Lewis (Scotland) according to Thomas (Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Vol. III, p. 130) circu-

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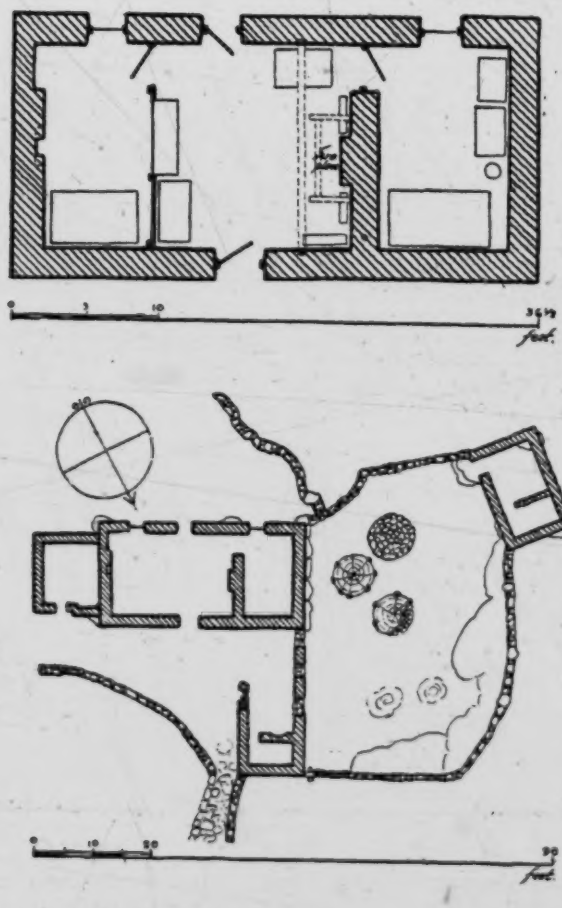

Fig. 1. Central-chimney house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

lar stone roofed houses *bothan*, existed side by side with timber proofed oblong houses called *aridhean* (p. 138).

The highly developed roof-constructions of the English crucktype, as well as those of the Saxon and other West European houses, have been of little or no importance for the development of Spanish, Welsh[3], Scottish and Scandinavian houses in early or in later times. The cruck construction as well as the roof construction with supporting poles seems to belong to a more limited sphere of building traditions. This fact however does not exclude the possibility that these traditions could have been in some way —

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP of P. 217---ANALYST]

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County Donegal

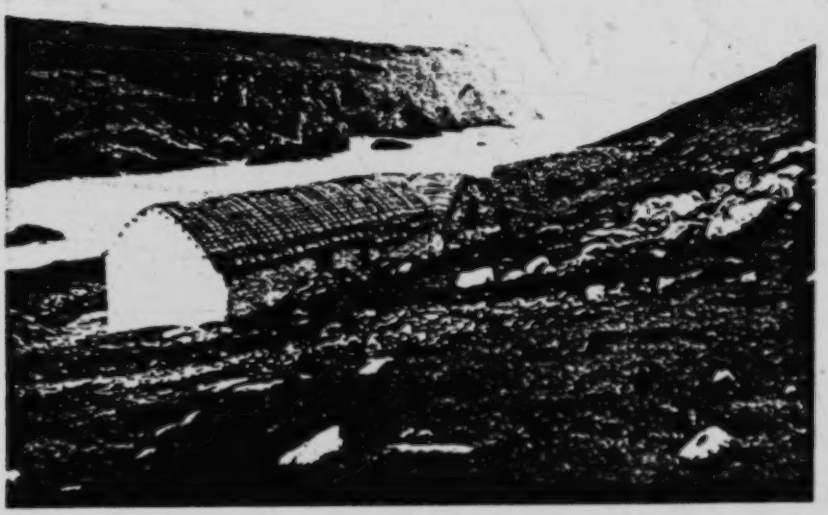
PLATE XLV

342 1. Roof with couples joined by two crossbeams. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.

2. Stream-lined roof. Port, Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.

1.

[133]



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[p.215]

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PLATE XLVI

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1.

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2.

[p. 216] [captions on P. 219, bottom]

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342 771 as a result of certain circumstances, such as social organisation, the demands and standard of the aristocracy, the clan, and the family etc. — introduced in Ireland, Scandinavia and other parts of Europe. This appears from some prehistoric materials as for example the Gall Arus near Dingle, Co. Kerry, and the so-called "kämpagravshuset" and the Viking Hall in Scandinavia.

Some of the features mentioned above in the descriptions of the central chimney-house and the gable-chimney house are common to nearly all primitive recent Irish houses.

342 354 It is especially interesting to notice the practice of providing two doorways, central and opposite, fig. 1, 3 and 4. In recent Irish houses the front door is called *doras tosaigh*, and the backdoor *doras cúl*. In Donegal however, I was told that the front door was called *doras an fhosgaidh*, door of the shelter, and the back door, *doras nagaoithe*. The opening and the closing of these two doors is determined by theprevailing wind, and its effect on the draught through the smokeholes. Thus the two doors were very often in Ireland made up of halfdoors, *leath dhoras*, constituting in co-operation with the smoke holes a machinery regulating the fire. In Ireland this is generally a turf-fire which needs special attention in its making, lighting and maintenance. The drawing off the smoke is also of importance.

342 777 Some superstitions connected with these two doors suggest that very old traditions lie behind them. There is a belief in Co. Kerry that it is very unlucky to go in one door and out the other. You must always go out of the door you entered by, otherwise you are supposed to take the luck of the house with you.

342 How the two doorways could be used with regard to the cattle I have shown by an example from Co. Kerry in my article in Béaloideas (op. cit. p. 70).

The two doorways are well-known from the Ancient Irish Laws and the old literature. The inches house and even larger houses had two doorways, a door in one and a hurdle (wattle) in the other (see Ancient Irish laws, Vol. IV, p. 305). O'Carry says that the principal house, even of kings, had but one room to which when the house was of an oblong form there were generally two doors, one opening east and one west. In the round houses on the other hand there seems to have been but one door, which faced south, west or east, and sometimes though rarely north. (O'Curry, Manners and customs of the ancient Irish. Vol. I). In Scottish beehive houses inhabited about 342 191 1850 however, there are often two opposite doors, about which Thomas says: "The two doors are a decided improvement, for the one upon the side on which the wind blows — that is, the weater door — is closed with a stone or

PLATE XLVI

1. Fastening the hay-ropes, when thatching. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.
2. Scollop-thatching. Connemara, Co. Galway.

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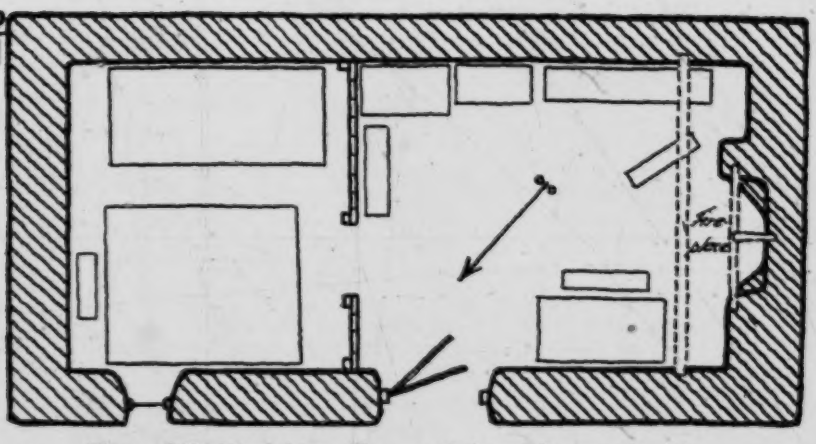

Fig. 2. Gable-chimney house. The weaver's house. Gorumna, Co. Galway.

turf, while the lee one is left open, and a gentle draught carries the smoke serenely above the heads of the inhabitants and through the Farlos (the smoke-hole in the apex of the roof)" F. L. W. Thomas, in Proceedings of the Soc. of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. III and vol. VII.

Also in Wales the two opposite doors have been known from prehistoric times to recent days. The Welsh long-house generally has these doors (see I. C. Peate, Welsh houses, Antiquity, 1936). They have also been found in prehistoric Welsh farm buildings excavated by Cyril and Aileen Fox (see Cyril and Ailen Fox, Forts and Farms on Margam Mountain, Glamorgan, Antiquity, 1934, p. 395 sq.).

The use of two opposite doors is however widespread. In Denmark and Southern Sweden (the plainlands in Skåne) the turf-fire was common until 1900, and the inside chimney is not so very old. In the 18th century, houses without any chimney were common, the two opposite doors and even the halfdoors being used for the regulation of the fire in the same way as in Ireland (see Åke Campbell, Skånska bygder under förra hälften av 1700-talet, Uppsala 1928, p. 208 sqq.). The complete stone-built chimney was introduced earlier in the woodlands of Scandinavia, where the wood-fire was common and the fire was not regulated by any two-door system.

In Spain and Italy I have seen the two doors, and Sigurd Erixon (in Den romerska Campagnans herdehyddor och deras konstruktiva karaktär, Arkeologiska studier tillägnade H. K. H. Kronprins Gustaf Adolf, Stockholm 1932, p. 255, p. 261 and p. 124 sqq. in this number) has mentioned them when

 [TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 221 ---- ANALYST]

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1. Thatched-chimney. Co. Clare.
2. Making hay-ropes. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.
3. Hobwalls carrying the chimney. Toormakeady, Co. Galway.

1.

2.

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3.

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Donegal

PLATE XLVIII

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354

1. Fire-place with iron-grate. Glencolumbkille, Co. Donegal.

2. The basket hanging to dry on the southwall of the house. Lough Eske, Co. Donegal.

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2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 discussing the herdsmen's oval and square straw-built houses in the Roman 171 Campagna. He indicates two different systems (1) the smoke leaving through the door and (2) the smoke leaving through a hole in the roof.

In English and especially in Saxon and other West European houses, the two opposite doors sometimes are placed in the same way as in the Welsh longhouses, or in the Irish houses, but the broad plan of these extremely large buildings makes the comparisons very vague.

Besides the types now mentioned which form the basis for the development of native house types, we find in Ireland of the present day many house types which are likely of foreign origin mostly introduced by government and landlord activities.

Belonging to this group I must also reckon a feature of housebuilding which is found particularly in Leinster and Eastern Connaught but also scattered here and there in other parts of the country. This distribution more [412] or less coincides with the distribution of the two-eared English spade, while the native type of house coincides with the single-eared Irish spade.

A partition of stone, mud or wood and lath is built on the side of the fireplace adjacent to the door, so that a person sitting at the fire cannot be seen through the open door. In the partition is a spyhole, through which one can see who is entering by the door, fig. 5.

This adjacence of fire and door with intervening partition is wellknown in England. As far as my knowledge goes I cannot look upon this as being an independent or original Irish type. Everything points to its being a late innovation. Such houses usually have a porch built at the entrance door and the arrangements of the rooms are not at all primitive.

The developed stone built house.

342 It is evident that as soon the primitive one-roomed stage is left, it will be difficult or impossible to decide whether the house represents the traditions of the central-chimney house or the traditions of the gable-chimney house.

In two ways the one-roomed stage has been left (1) by dividing up the one-roomed house by partition walls, (2) by building additions to it at the gables.

Usually it seems that the room at the lower end of the house has been made by building a thin partition wall, *sileail*, which separates it from the other part of the house, fig. 2 and 4. It is as far as I know, very unusual to build an addition to this part of the house. When new rooms are made by building additions, these are usually made to the chimney or fireplace gable.

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342 This custom should be compared with the proverb which I have heard in different parts of Western Ireland: "Only a man stronger than God can [539] build back (westward) of his house" *(Is treise ná Dia an fear a chuireann siar le na theach")*. Additions made at the fireplace end of the house are always used as bedrooms. Therefore it will be very difficult to decide whether the bedroom behind the fireplace has originated as an addition to a gable-chimney house or as a partition of a central chimney house. When the wall behind the fire-place does not reach the roof the house must be regarded as a central-chimney house. Now and then it is also possible to discover in another way whether the bedroom belongs to the original house, or is built as an addition to a gable-chimney house.

In both house types the partition walls at the lower end of the house very often were made by very thin wooden partitions, *sleála*. As already mentioned, furniture especially the dresser may be used instead of a partition wall, fig. 1.

In Eastern and Southern Ireland you will find the fireplace cut off to a certain degree from the living room and forming a special kitchen corner by stone-built breasts or piers at both or at one side of the fire-place. This side wall of the fire-place can also be built of wood, fig. 6, and can go a good way into the room, so that the kitchen corner will be more like a closed room.

342 171 Such houses with fireplace partition apparently have their parallels in Welsh houses. The Irish house, then, closely resembles to the living room of the Welsh long-house. This type of Irish house can be called "house with fireplace partition".

Another way of arranging accommodation in the house is to build lofts, *lochta*, and rooms on an upper floor. This upper floor will be arranged at both ends of the living room or kitchen. Then the arrangement with the house divided into three sections and with lofts at both ends is very similar to a house type in southern Sweden, the socalled Sydgötiska huset,[4] which has the kitchen or "stugan" in the centre of the house without any loft and at both ends additional chambers with lofts. Another likeness between the Irish and South Swedish houses is that there are bedplaces in the same way in the additional rooms.

[417] In the Irish house the loft can be reached by a ladder from the kitchen.

The construction of the different elements of the house.

342 Lacking nearly every architectural consciousness and at the same time every kind of imported building-material, the Irish peasant house never

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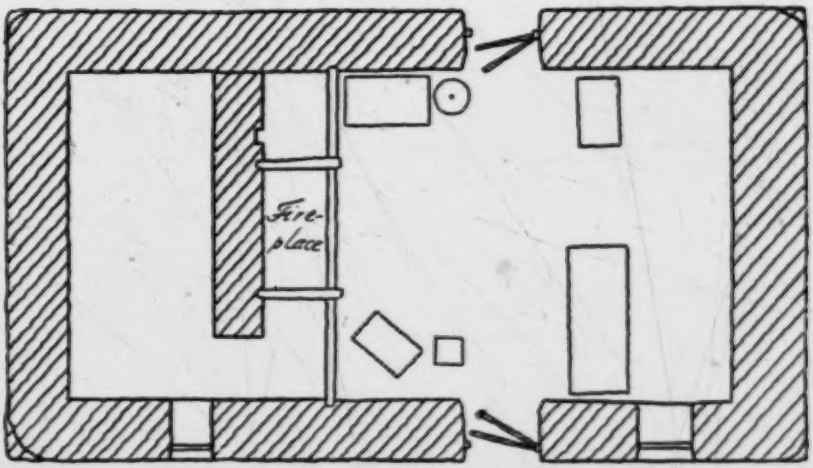

Fig. 3. Central-chimney house. Spiddle, Co. Galway.

stands out in bold relief against its background, but melts into it even as a tree or a rock. Built of stone, clay, sods, grass and straw brought from the vicinity, the house harmonizes with the landscape to which it belongs. Whenever the old building traditions are faithfully maintained its features are of a fine simplicity.

Here I shall not describe how the house has been determined by the different types of landscape, and by the social structure of the human community, to which it belongs. I only observe that the settlements and houses often are scattered but sometimes can be found built in groups or rows. 361 342

Very archaic dwelling houses generally are erected on a slope, the difference in level between the high end and the low end of the house being one, two or three feet. In houses where the farm animals have been under the same roof as the family, the places for the animals always were at the low end and the fireplace and bedplaces at the high end. This is the same arrangement as in the Scottish black houses.

The floor. The floor is commonly earthen, but generally paved at the fireplace. Now and then the upper end of the house is totally paved, or the whole floor is flagged. Very often the place round the fire is distinctly separated from the rest of the floor by its special paving. In modern times the floor is very often concrete. A covering with wooden boards at the upper end of the house and in the bedroom is often to be seen now-a-days. The stone or earth- 342

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342 The stone or earth-
en floor may be sprinkled for instance with coral beachsand to help in sweeping it.

[356] In some primitive houses, where the cattle still had their places, in the
[231] low end, I have found a gutter or conduit going across the low end and leading out through the door.

333 *The walls.* There are two main types of wall construction representing very
342 old building traditions.

[172] 1. The dry stone walls, *fallaí fuara* — met with in the prehistoric buildings, *clocháns* etc. — are built of stones (often flattish) without mortar. Dwelling-houses which have been built with dry stone walls have in later times been covered both inside and outside with mortar, pl. XLIII: 1. The space between the bigger stones are often carefully filled up by small stones, *spallaí*.

Especially in Co. Clare I have admired the precision developed in the construction of the walls.

[172] 2. Of prehistoric origin are also the mud, clod or clay walls, *falla feidín*. A fantastic explanation of the term makes it equal to *falla ar feadh dín*, a wall that endures as long as the roof is kept properly thatched (Dinneen).

The clay was pulverized and made into a thick mortar by wetting it and mixing it with cut rushes or course sprat hay. The well built mud-wall houses form comfortable dwellings and it has happened that people have regretted leaving excellent thatched "mud walls" to live in cold stone-walled slatted dwellings.

342 The foundation of the walls is sometimes a pronounced feature of the house. Whilst the walls usually have a width of 1½, 2 or 3 feet, the foundation is wider, forming a shelf or broad step along the building serving as a pathway to the door. The foundation is sometimes not very dissimilar to some prehistoric house-foundations. In this connection I would like to remark that the pathway and nearest surroundings of the entrance door are sometimes
[191] paved by a mosaic of small cobble-stones from the sea-shore. This I have seen in costal districts in South West, and I suggest that it is the same kind of pavement as appears in Portugal, Madeira, Marocco and elsewhere at the border of the Atlantic And the Mediterranean Sea.

Doors and windows. In many primitive houses of to-day the construction of the door-opening is extremely archaic: flat stones serving as lintel and as threshold. The frame of the door is wooden.

The doors usually have bolts of wood and a hasp to close the door. A thick wooden beam can be placed across inside the door on stormy nights, certain holes in the wall at both sides of the door being made for this beam,

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
County Kerry

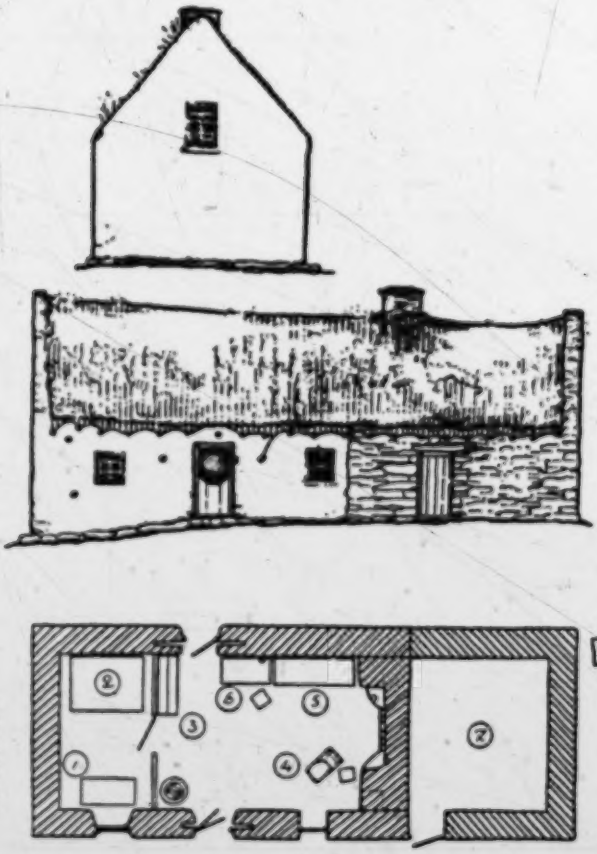

Fig. 4. Gable-chimney house. Cillrialaig, Co. Kerry. The cattle once in the lower end of the house. Now removed to a house added to the upper gable wall. 1 table, 2 bed, 3 dresser, 4 cradle, 5 bench, 6 table, 7 sowhouse.

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fig. 4. In Co. Kerry, Co. Galway and other parts of Ireland, I have been told [171] of rough strong doors of wattles bound together with ropes of *sugán*. Such a door, the hurdle door, *sgálán fraoigh* or *scalpán*, was more commonly used as a door for cattle sheds. It is found also in Scotland (see e. g. an illustration showing sheilings in Jura (S. W. Scotland) in Pinkertons Voyages and Travels, vol. III, p. 278, London 1809) and it is mentioned in the Ancient Irish laws. About the two opposite doors and the half-doors see p. 217.

In older times a hole in the wall, a looplight, served as window. It was closed [284, at night with a hay-wisp or a wooden shutter, *cómhla*, which was removed 414] by day and secured at night by a stick placed across or by a latch.

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 Windows, as well as chimneys, were taxed, hence the oldfashioned blind [65] wall and the old fireplace (without chimney) being preserved. The daylight was admitted to the kitchen by the door opening. A pad of straw was placed at the door, *sop i mbéal dorais* (Dinneen) on which tailors and other crafts- [294] men used to sit to avoid window-tax. When windows came later on, they were placed on the side of the house sheltered from the prevailing wind.

The gables. The stone built gables are higher or lower according to the form of the roof, which is determined by the wind. In some districts of Ireland [184] especially in the Aran Islands, Connemara, Sligo, Mayo there are often even in very primitive buildings, step gables or serrated gables. In other parts of Ireland the gables are straight up to the top. In Southern and Eastern Ireland the gables are generally of this type. Half thatched or hipped gables are sometimes found in the east, where now and then the thatch is also bent over the gable edge in the same way as in Wales. This is common on mud houses.

How the gables protect the ends of the thatched roof and support the horizontal ribs is shown in pl. XLIV: 2.

The roof. Roof and wall constructions meet one another in the most primitive stages, when the house is only a roof over a foundation wall, of a cavity, or when the roof is constructed similarly to the *clochán* with the upper course of stones slightly overlapping the lower course. This construction is not known among dwelling houses of to-day, but can be found in outhouses, sweating buths etc.

Roofs made by wide slates or stone flags will be seen in some parts of Ireland when there is a natural access to stones suitable for slates as in Co. Clare where such roofs are found on outhouses with the narrow stone walls carrying the flags.

The Irish house from olden times generally has had not a stone roof, but a thatched roof, *ceann tuighe*. The art of making good thatched roofs is now dying out but in earlier times Irishmen had developed great skill in roofing with thatch.

The thatched roof is supported internally by beams joined in pairs forming [804] the couples, *cúplaí*. The couples are placed at a certain distance and the space enclosed between two couples must be looked upon as a sort of architectural unit. The length of the house can be measured by the number of couples. [171] A very similar kind of measuring is well known in Denmark and Skåne. In many old houses the length of the house seems to indicate traditions from the ancient Irish laws (See Addy, p. 84).

The roof-supporting system of beams varies very little. The beams can

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

be more or less primitive. The couples can be constructed in two slightly different ways depending on the intended height of the roof. In very windy districts near the sea very low, semi-circular roofs that do not catch much wind are used. The roof is streamlined and there is no comb along the roof, pl. XLV: 2. 342

This roof is made in the following way. Very strong couples rest on the walls and are joined by two crossbeams, the lower called *faradh* and the upper *maide mullaigh*. These joining beams are just as strong as the couples themselves. They are joined to the couples by means of one or two wooden pegs on each side. The couples never meet. Above this arrangement are the purlins, *taobhán*. Transversally across these are slender laths called *cleithedin*, pl. XLV: 1.

High roofs with combs are supported by couples joined in pairs and held together at the top by a wooden peg, *pionna*. The ridge beam, *maide droma*, rests on the hollows formed at the junctions of the couples, and parallel to it but lying transversally on the couples are purlins, *tobhán*, on each side of which run the whole length of the roof. To brace the couples there are tiebeams, *maidi snaidhm*, pl. XLIV.

On this foundation of roofing, sticks are spread tough sods of grass, the earthen side inwards. The sods cut from the ground can either be made about 5 ft. long and 2 ft. wide or a bit longer than the side of the roof and about 3 ft. broad. In the former case the sods overlap, the higher over the lower. In the latter case the sods stretch from the wall to the ridge and are bent over the ridge. Over the ridge then there are two layers of sods. In both cases the one row of sods overlaps the second row beside it. I have found the short sods used in Southern Ireland, and the long ones in Donegal. [824] [184]

The thatch is put on in two ways. One method of thatching corresponds to the thatched houses of the European continent viz: the scollop-thatching or rod-thatching, pl. XLVI: 2. The other method is the hay-rope or *sugán* thatching known from the border of the North Atlantic and the North Sea. The scollop-thatching is made in such a way that straw, *tuighe*, or mountain grass, *fineán*, is fastened to the sods by means of horizontal rows of rods, *scolb*. The rods are fastened to the underlying sods by twigs, *bannai*. Both *scolb* and *bannai* are of hazel or sally. Oat, wheat, or barley straw is used for thatching but on the western seabord rye straw is used. Rye is considered most durable. According to scollop-thatching the thatching of the ridge is of certain interest. Here and round the chimney-shaft but seldom at the thatch of eaves, *bun tsop*, a kind of ornament can be formed by the twigs and scollops. But this is an ornament caused by the necessity of fastening and 342 824 342

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 trimming the thatch. When using the *sugán* or hay-rope method the straw, bound in large bunches, is placed on the roof in rows, each 'set' about 18" wide. The thatcher beginning from below takes a handful of straw and puts the top part of the straw against the roof. He then puts another handful slightly above the last, so that the handfuls lie on top of each other. The bottom part of the handful is spread and flattened out with hands. Then the
342 ropes are put on. A man stays on a ladder at each gable of the house, pl.
284 XLVI: 1. Another man carries the rope along the roof by means of a hay-fork while another walks beside him loosening the ball of ropes. The first rope is put on along the eave, the next above until the top of the house is reached. The ropes are fastened along the gables by means of stone plugs. Then the vertical ropes are put on, and fixed to the front and back walls of the house, also by stone plugs. The two systems of ropes can also be intertwined with each other, so that the ropes form a kind of unintentional ornamentation. Other means of fastening the ropes are by weighting the vertical ropes with stones attached to the ends. The stones are placed in two different ways, (1) hanging below the eave of the house, this is the most primitive way, (2) laying the stones on the roof just above the eave to press down the thatch at the same time as they hold the ropes. The rows of stones when finally laid give a good finish. This is also an example of unintentional ornamentation. It is worth noticing that the hay cocks too may be fastened in nearly the same three ways by means of hay ropes.

342 In order to produce hay-ropes used for binding the thatch and the hay cocks etc. a multitude of simple tools has been invented, pl. XLVII: 2.

To sum up some conclusions about thatching and roof, it seems clear to me that two, perhaps related, but nevertheless unlike traditions have been at work here, namely the scollop thatching, with the highly elevated roof resting on couples that meet each other, on the one hand, and on the other hand hay rope thatching, with the hay ropes fastened to stones, and often a low roof without perceptible ridge resting on a couple construction, where the couples do not join. Parallels to the former tradition are to be found on the European continent and the latter are mainly found, as far as I know, along the coast of the Atlantic and the North Sea.

I must add that the well-built thatched roof is at the same time a masterpiece of technical ability and a feat of artistic skill. The best Irish thatching give the finest peasant roof in Europe. It is unfortunately, however, very expensive and demands constant attention to keep it in good repair so it is very often replaced by a cheap, shoddy roof of foreign origin.

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

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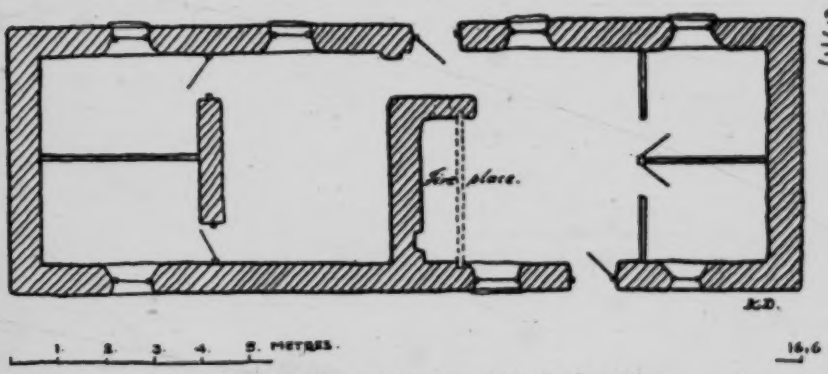

Fig. 5. Entrance-door and fireplace. Cush, Co. Limerick.

The fireplace and the chimney.

Slowly, step by step, or suddenly, by an abrupt innovation the fireplace has developed from its simplest original form, i. e. the placing of the fire directly on the flagstones of the floor. I have never found a fire lying quite free on the floor in Ireland, although I have heard of such fires where one could go round the fire. From Tousist, Co. Kerry, I have heard of houses which had the fire in the centre of the floor, and a casing, *simné*, of woven twigs, *slata fighe*, over it to convey the smoke out through the opening in the centre of the roof. This arrangement has been obsolete here for upwards of 80 years.

In both central-chimney houses and gable-chimney houses of recent time there is always a wall at the back of the firehob. This wall constitutes the endwall, *pinniuir*,[5] of the kitchen in gable-chimney houses. In more newly built central-chimney houses this wall reaches the top of the roof as the stonebuilt chimney is joined to it, but in old central chimney houses it only reaches the same height as the side walls.

The hearth, *teinteán*, is usually at floor level in many parts of Ireland. There is a great variety of hearth-stones: large flags of stone, small cobble-stones from the seashore etc. Even round the hearth or fire-place there is a pavement owing to the oldfashioned way of using the fire for cooking. Bits of fire are taken from the fire, and put on the floor round the fire-place, for instance when they are baking in the bastible, and at the same time cooking, or when they wish to leave the tea drawing. Sometimes there can be two or three small fires at the same time round the hearth.

The fireplace thus represents the pure hearth-type, being in direct contrast

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to the Middle and especially East European fireplace traditions, which are dominated by the stonebuilt oven. The built-in oven is unfamiliar and unknown to the Irish fireplace, and the Irish types of bread. For baking, which is done every day in Ireland, special utensils, representing very old and original traditions, are used. For baking the griddle bread, *arán greadaille*, the griddle or grid iron, *greadall*, is used. The griddle rests on the tripod, *teannta* or *crann aráin*. In Northern Ireland, bread irons are used, which are not put on the tripod over the fire, but the cake is placed in an upright position supported by the bread iron which is placed before the fire. Very primitive is the method to lean the cake against the bread-stick, *crothnán* or *maide aráin*, which is only a wooden twig of three branches or a three forked root. In Ancient Ireland according to O'Curry (op. cit. vol. I, p. CCCLXIII) the wheatmeal and barley cakes were baked on a griddle, but the oatmeal cakes called *bkocaire* or *blethach* were always baked in upright position before the fire by means of the threepronged fork or stick called *maide an bkocaire* or the *cranachan*.

There is also another certainly old Irish method of bread baking i. e. in the bastible, *bácús*. When metal stores however are found in peasant houses, they are definitely a late cultural loan from England.

Standing at the back of the hearth is one large, thickish flag or often three or more stones forming the hob, *iarta*. In very primitive dwellings I have seen only a couple of rough stones used as hobstones, *leac iarta*. In districts where mud-houses are common a mass or boss of clay behind the fireplace makes up the hob. The pot, *corcán*, or kettle, *citeal*, rests against the hob or hobstones when on the fire. The hob constitutes a protection even for the wall behind.

In Eastern and Southern Ireland and even elsewhere the hob is built up carefully from stone and mortar. An ash corner will be found at the sides of the hob.

In the very primitive stage there is no chimney at all, the smoke finding its way out through the door or a hole in the roof. As I have already mentioned, there can be two smoke holes, one at each gable end of the roof. This is a stage of the black houses very seldom seen in Ireland to day.

At the next stage a kind of basket or wooden chimney is hung over the fire to create a draught, *tarrac*, and to lead the smoke out through the hole in the roof. When there is no chimney but even later, when the chimney has come, to regulate the circulation of air in the kitchen, is is necessary to open and close one of the doors to allow for the changing winds. In the Irish houses the woman who looks after the fire always takes the "wind door" and

2: Campbell B, E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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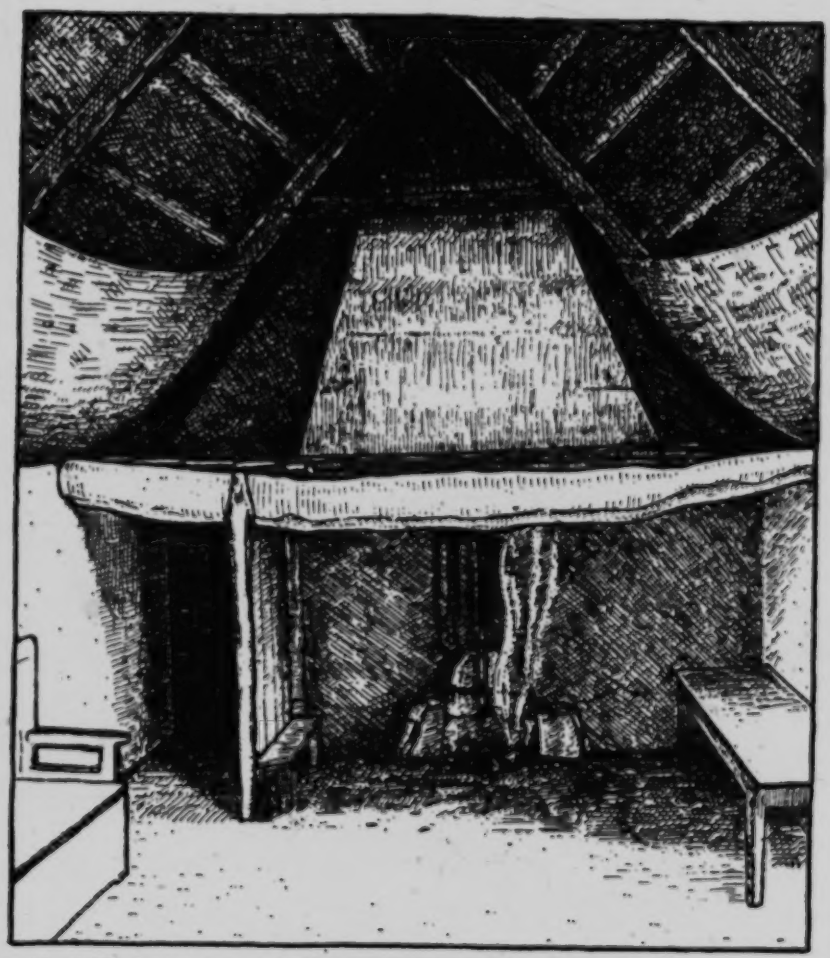

Fig. 6. Wooden side-wall of the fireplace. The kitchen corner. Kyle, Ballinglen, Co. Wicklow.

the "shelter door" into consideration, the whole kitchen being of importance with regard to the fire.

The basket chimney, *síneán*, is plastered with clay inside and outside to resist sparks from the fire. A plaster mixture of clay and calfmanure is said to be very useful. The older chimneys were straight i. e. on looking up from the fireplace the sky was visible above. In later ones the flue, *poll an deataigh*,

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2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6 Rural Irish ER6

342 is bent from side to side to create more draught. The chimney narrowed gra-
354 dually upwards until the basket, *cis*, on top was reached. In old houses the chimney was not always capped by the basket-like contraption on the outside, for instance not in coastal districts in the North, pl. XLV: 2. The external chimney however is a noteworthy detail. It was now and then of woven rods of twig or willow and it was thatched in some parts of Ireland, pl. XLVII: 1. In other old houses pieces of board were placed on edge in square formation.

The external chimney is sometimes lacking even if there is an inside chimney. In Donegal in places exposed to the wind, I have seen this even in houses with a stonebuilt chimney.

The basket or wooden chimney is supported by two wooden beams resting on the side walls, sometimes however projecting from the gable wall, pl. XLVII: 3. In a later stage there are two pillar walls or hobwalls carrying the basket chimney.

Across the chimney (inside) halfway up or more, a stick of cut tree-branch projects across the chimney. This stick is supporting the chimneyrack or pot-rack, hanger, *drol*, which is an iron bar and hangs down to the fire-level. Another way of hanging pots over the fire is to use the crane, *croch*, a hooked bar of wood (in older times) or iron. Usually the hangers and the crane are combined and in fact there are many hangers hanging at the same time from the crane. Now and then a chain is used as a hanger.

[352] At the side of the fireplace there is a stool, *stól*, or a number of stools, often varying a little in size, but usually very low. Primitive is the block of wood, *bloc*, a section of a tree, used as a stool. This I have seen in chimney-corners in Co. Kerry. There the round stool of coiled hay-ropes, *suidhistín*, also will be found.

The hob or protection wall behind the fire can develop in such a way that it incorporates the two stools at both sides of the fire, so that there will be two stone-built seats.

Also the pier of the fireplace will be built by pilasters on both sides forming a stonebreast, *piléar an teintedin*, on which the wattled or wooden chimney rests.

[352] In the pier, as well as in the stone wall behind the fireplace, in the hob, and underneath the stone-seats, there are small closets or holes used to keep utensils. In Donegal, I have seen a hole in the wall at each side of the fire, the one hole for the woman's snuffbox and knitting, the other exclusively for the man's pipe.

In later times the chimney is often built of stone and when at last the pier

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or breast, the seats, and the chimney are built of stone, and joined together, the common modern type of Irish fireplace emerges. It can however take on a slightly different form in different parts of Ireland, for instance in Donegal one finds a carved breast and in Southern Ireland it stands straight up at right angles to the floor.

Only the hearth itself has still another stage to pass through in some parts of Ireland. The hearth will be built so that the fire rests in a grate, in late times much elevated and supplied with iron bars. Below is a place for the ashes. This iron grate owes its origin to the fact that in different parts of Ireland, other fuel such as coal was substituted for turf, pl. XLVIII: 1.

To the coal fireplace often belongs the bellows which can be made in different ways such as the hand bellows and the whealbellows. These iron grates and bellows can be found in such forms in Welsh and English houses.

The hearth from the earliest times forms the centre of family activity in Ireland. Here is the rallying point of the people. The fireplace has attracted to itself the seating places of the house, and in earlier times even the sleeping places. The place of honour is the corner seat near the fire, where the guests are invited to sit down. The stone-built seats or the small wooden stools placed at the side of the fire in primitive Irish dwellings are probably the predecessors of the comfortable armchairs found at every West European fireplace, in palace or cottage, where the same tradition of social activity is attached to the fire seats. From the many folk-beliefs connected with the fire and the fireplace, I only notice that in the South of Ireland, on All Hallow Eve, the fire is not allowed to go out and food is placed on the floor for the dead people who are expected to visit the house. This custom seems to indicate that in ancient times the places for eating were in front of the fireplace. In Scandinavia the food for the dead people is placed on the table.

The Cailleach.

From the northern coast of Donegal to Galway bay, but not south of it, I have found the projection outwards with the bed, *cailleach*. The outshot with the *cailleach* is ordinarily put at one side of the fireplace. In a district between Tuam, Co. Galway, and Tubercurry, Co. Sligo, I have found a richly developed *cailleach* tradition. In many townlands nearly every house is fitted with a *cailleach*, and it is not un-common to find a *cailleach* beside the fireplace in the kitchen, continued by a *cailleach* put to the bedroom behind the fireplace. This *cailleach* connects the houses of central and northern Ireland with the primitive houses of Scotland, *both* and *tigh dubh*, where the in-

2: Campbell B,E-5 (1934-1935) 1937 ER6-Rural Irish ER6

352 built bed in the hall beside the fireplace has been common. But this custom
171 of bed is also known over a wider area along the North Sea. As to the outshot it is to be remarked that it must be compared with the outshots of English and Northwest European houses. Where the outshot tradition is natural to the house-types, the outshots are used for purposes and not only for beds.

In Donegal I have found *cailleachs* closed with wooden doors, similar to the built in beds of North-West Europe. The *cailleach* is cut off by curtains.

It has been mentioned that the dresser at an early stage of development has formed part of the partition. This and other facts (the dresser has generally a fixed traditional place, different in different parts of Ireland) seems to indicate that the dresser belongs — as in Scandinavia and West-European countries — to a rather old set of furniture.

The table however seems not to have any prominent place in the old-fashioned houses at least in Western and Northern Ireland. It is always put along a wall in primitive houses, and one can never sit round it. It never attracted the social activities of the house, and there are no ceremonies connected with the places at the table, as in countries where the table is the predominating social and family-centre. In this respect the table in Ireland has never supplanted the fireplace. There are no references, as far as I am told in the early tales to people feasting at the table. I think that the table
[184] does not belong to the original set of furniture. In many fishermen's dwel-
lings in North-West of Donegal it is still missing. The people sit in front
[264] of the fireplace round the shallow-basket, *ciseog*, when eating, the basket resting upon the knees of the familymembers. This basket will be seen after dinner-time hanging to dry on the south wall of the house, pl. XLVIII: 2. I suppose this is the native and original "table", at least in certain cultural spheres of Western and Northern Ireland.

[113] [1] In a valuable article by Ludwig Mühlhausen, Contributions to the study of the concrete material culture of the Gaoltacht, Cork Arch. Soc. Vls. XXXVIII, p. 67, and XXXIX, p. 41, et seq., is found a very good description of houses in Dingle Peninsula and Cornamona, Co. Galway. I have not come across any more detailed contribution to the study of the Irish house. From books of travel and novels some information can be picked up. See Béaloideas 1935- p. 57 seq.

[114] [2] The material here presented has been collected by me during journeys in Ireland in the years 1934 and 1935. For the many facilities afforded me in pursuing my investigations in Ireland I must express my thanks to the Irish Folklore Commission and its Director Mr Séamus O'Duilearga, on whose behalf I undertook these studies. I am also grateful to my Irish friends both scholars and country people who kindly lent me their assistance. Here I can only mention Mr Seán O'Suilleabháin, B. A., and Miss Aine Ni Chróinín, M. A., especially for having supplied the Gaelic terms used by me.

[3] As to the Welsh long-houses the cruck construction seems to be an exception (see Peate p. 452).

[4] Cfr. Sigurd Erixon: Skansens Kulturgeschichtliche Abteilung, Führer. Stockholm 1928, p. 92.

[5] *Pinniuir*, f., a gable, a gable-end; fig. a patron, chief, etc. *pinniuir an tighe*, the house-gable, fig. the "head" of the house. Fr. pignon, Eng. pynum. Dinneen, An Irish-English Dictionary.